

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed on July 8, 2003 by the United States Patent and Trademark Office, the Examiner rejected claims 17-19 and objected to claims 20-23. Claims 1-16 were previously cancelled and Applicant has amended claims 17-23 by way of this amendment. After entry of these amendments, claims 17-23 remain in the above-identified patent application. Reconsideration is respectfully requested in light of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks. The foregoing amendments and the following remarks are believed to be fully responsive to the Office Action mailed on July 8, 2003, and also render all currently pending claims at issue patentably distinct over the references of record.

I. SUMMARY OF EXAMINER INTERVIEW

The undersigned thanks Examiner Richardson for the courtesies extended during a telephone interview held on September 2, 2003. During the telephone interview held with Examiner Richardson, proposed amendments were discussed with the Examiner and the Examiner indicated that additional consideration and a supplemental search would be conducted upon receipt of a response and amendment with claims amended as proposed by the Applicant.

During the Examiner interview, the Examiner also requested that the Applicant identify support in the specification for "transferring at least a third portion of the thermal energy," "transferring at least a fourth portion of the thermal energy," and "transferring at least a fifth portion of the thermal energy" as recited in dependent claims 18, 20, and 22, respectively. As one example of support for these claims, Applicant draws the Examiner's attention to paragraph 18 of the specification, which provides that "the one or more heat

pipes 50 are configured to absorb at least a portion of the thermal energy produced by the nuclear reactor and transfer at least a portion of this absorbed thermal energy into one or more of the compartments (40,42,44,46,48),” with added emphasis.

II. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

The Examiner rejected claims 17-19 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. patent no. 5,319,688 as issued to Hora et al on June 7, 1994 (hereinafter referred to as “Hora”) and also rejected claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. patent no. 5,428,653 as issued to El-Genk on June 27, 1995 (hereinafter referred to as “El-Genk”). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Applicant has amended the claims to further distinguish Applicant’s invention. For example, independent claim 17 has been amended to recite “pneumatically isolating said second gas introduced into said second compartment, said second gas inlet and said second gas outlet from said first gas introduced into said first compartment, said first gas inlet and said first gas outlet,” with added emphasis. As the references of record do not teach, disclose or suggest each and every limitation as set forth in the amended independent claim, it is respectfully submitted that claim 17 is not anticipated by the references of record. Accordingly, anticipation of the claims that depend from claim 17 (i.e., claims 18-23) does not exist. Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the 35 U.S.C. §102(b) rejections.

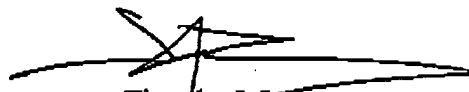
III. CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that the above-identified application as amended is now in condition for allowance and the Applicant therefore earnestly requests such allowance. Should the Examiner have any questions or wish to discuss the foregoing response and amendment, Applicant requests that the Examiner contact the undersigned at (480) 385-5060.

If for some reason Applicant have not requested a sufficient extension and/or have not paid a sufficient fee for this response and/or for the extension necessary to prevent abandonment of this application, please consider this as a request for an extension for the required time period and/or authorization to charge Deposit Account No. 50-2091 for any fee which may be due.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated 09/15/2004


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